

Guidelines for the Discovery of Human Remains

1. All persons who know of the existence and location of human remains must, by law, **notify the county coroner and local law enforcement**. This must be done in the most expeditious manner possible. (RCW 27.44; 68.50; 68.60)
2. Any person engaging in ground disturbing activity that encounters skeletal human remains must **cease all activity which may cause further disturbance to the remains, make a reasonable effort to protect the area from further disturbance, report the presence and location of those remains to the coroner and local law enforcement**. (RCW 27.44; 68.50; 68.60)
3. The county coroner will assume jurisdiction over the human skeletal remains and make a determination of whether those remains are forensic or non-forensic. (RCW 27.44; 68.50; 68.60)
4. If the county coroner determines the remains are non-forensic, then the Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation will take jurisdiction over the remains. (RCW 27.44; 68.50; 68.60)
5. The State Physical Anthropologist will make a determination of whether the remains are Indian or Non-Indian and report that finding to the affected parties. (RCW 27.44, 68.50; 68.60)
6. The DAHP will handle all consultation with the affected parties as to the future preservation, excavation, and disposition of the remains if there is no federal agency involved.

Questions:

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